1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, some unhafted, always worn in the belt by women and used for preparing food and for sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in both gathering activities and in cooking. Other items that might be found in or around an Efe archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell (Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and sometimes used in the search for honey, an ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children, and a few personal possessions such as hunting charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the archers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn tucked between the legs. The upper part of the body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Basketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur bands which may also be worn on the arm. Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded bark. Both men and women may wear, around the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers

[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

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[ARCHERS]

[CP. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276.

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-C]

416
314
276
824

FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season.

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil-

[P 210-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

262 614 [184] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

[264] [284] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [961] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[p. 222-B]

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Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or because some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

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instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

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his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

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765 534 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud beaten from walls.

765 533 781 513 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their dancing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house. 765 781 535 534 372 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire. It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliberately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. *All except a few of the elders followed it on its last* tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it. 276 He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[206] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[203] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home [535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their *hosts and think it their duty* to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it [251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

After this come the various diseases which kill the pygmies. Pneumonia and dysentery are the greatest killers; infection is rare. Far less important than disease even is the action of hostile animals—elephants, buffalo, or leopards. Once in a while an old leopard, too old to catch antelope, will dare run the risk of sneaking into a pygmy camp at night. The pygmy houses have no doors, and the leopard may slink into a house and grab a pygmy. At the noise so created, other pygmies will wake up and attack the leopard with spears or firebrands. Sometimes the leopard wins completely and carries off his victim's body, to munch at leisure. Sometimes he drops the mangled corpse, and at other times the pygmy may survive. I have seen one pygmy woman who had most of her face bitten away by a leopard and who still lived. The pygmy resistance to wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

Another occasional cause of death is burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire. Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

[P.341-B]